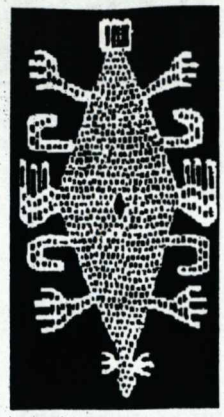

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Media Advisory

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East Timor Eyewitnesses to Testify Before Congress

Two East Timorese survivors of recent paramilitary violence in the Indonesia-occupied territory will testify before the U.S. Congress this week. The eyewitnesses will describe atrocities committed by paramilitary groups organized and armed by the Indonesian military. Two Congressional briefings and a press conference on Capitol Hill will take place from May 4 to May 7.

The two survivors -- Francisco, a survivor of the April 6 massacre in Liquica and Vicente Soares Faria, Vice Dean at the University of East Timor, blacklisted by paramilitaries -- will be joined by Manuel dos Martires, an East Timorese with detailed, first-hand knowledge of Indonesian military and paramilitary operations in East Timor.

Scheduled events in Washington, DC, include:

- Tuesday, May 4, 4 pm. Rayburn House Office Building (Room 2200), Joint Human Rights and Progressive Caucus Briefing
- Wednesday, May 5 at 2:30 pm. Dirksen 216. Press Conference with Senators Patrick Leahy and Russell Feingold and Congresman Patrick Kennedy (invited).
- Friday afternoon, May 7, 2 pm. Rayburn House Office Building (Room 2200), House Human Rights Subcommittee Briefing.

The three East Timorese witnesses have come to the United States at a time of increasing paramilitary violence in their homeland. In the last month, at least 100 people have been killed and over 10,000 internal refugees created as paramilitary groups in cooperation with elements of the Indonesian military have been attacking pro-independence villagers and leaders. On Wednesday, the Foreign Ministers of Portugal and Indonesia are expected to sign an agreement to hold a UN-sponsored vote in early August which could lead to independence for the former Portuguese colony. The paramilitaries, supporting Indonesia's continued occupation, have announced their intention to disrupt the vote.

Scheduled to appear with the East Timorese will be Indonesian human rights activist Aryati, human rights advocate Arnold Kohen, Human Rights Watch-Asia Director Sidney Jones, and ETAN Washington Representative Lynn Fredriksson. Documentation of recent military and paramilitary violence will also be available.

All three East Timorese are available for interviews. They are scheduled plan to be in New York the week of May 10.

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